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CONTENTS.	PAGE
EDITORIALS.....	233-236
San Francisco and the Japanese Children—The International Union of the American Republics—The Roosevelt Professorship at Berlin.....	
EDITORIAL NOTES.....	236-240
No Case Before the Hague Court—Dreadnaught Philosophy—Indications of Peace—Ambassador Reid's Prophecy—Initiative Belongs to America—Dangers of War—England and France—The Anti-Opium Edict—French to Visit Berlin—The Workers and Peace—La Salle A. Maynard—A Good Example.....	
BREVITIES.....	240-242
GENERAL ARTICLES:	
An Appeal to Ministers and Churches.....	243-244
Letter to the President on the Program of the Second Hague Conference.....	244
Towards the Patience of God. <i>A Poem. Edwin Arnold Brenholtz</i>	244
Reception of the New Minister of Salvador and Honduras at Washington.....	244-245
Echoes of the Peace Congress.....	245-246
The King and Queen of Italy at the Peace Pavilion.....	246
The Duty of an Ambassador. <i>Sir Mortimer Durand</i>	246-247
Autumnal Meetings of the British Peace Society.....	247-248
War and the Spirit of Democracy. <i>Rev. Charles F. Dole</i>	248-250
The Gentle Art of Making Enemies. <i>Lucia Ames Mead</i>	250-251
Dr. Rivière's Medical League of Peace.....	251-252
CORRESPONDENCE.....	252
NEW BOOKS.....	252-253
PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.....	253
International Arbitration and Peace Lecture Bureau.....	253

San Francisco and the Japanese Children.

Whether justly or unjustly, our national reputation for race prejudice has been strengthened by the course taken by the San Francisco school authorities in regard to the Japanese,—so easily is a whole nation judged by the conduct of a portion of it, however small. The *Mémorial Diplomatique*, a Paris weekly journal of strong cosmopolitan spirit, writes thus of the San Francisco affair:

"The Japanese imagined, quite naïvely, that men are differentiated by their qualities. The North Americans reveal to them that the worth of a man is measured by his color. The most noble heart, the most marvelous genius, if he is brown, red or black, will be looked upon with sovereign contempt by the last of the cowboys of the Far West or of the street sweepers of New York, who has that quality of qualities, that of being white. It is foolish, it is barbarous; but that is the way it is. It is useless to seek to change this primitive cerebrality; it is innate; it is atavic. It comes straight from the savage Aryans of India, whose songs, whose prayers repeat incessantly the superiority of the white man, boast in every line of the color, make pigment the criterion of the human species. Incurable monomania! Regrettable, furthermore, especially for the people of the United States, who, neces-

sarily, will one day have to bear the consequences of this intellectual inferiority."

Intellectual inferiority! Savage Aryans! That is the way in which the exclusion of the Japanese youth from the San Francisco schools has caused us to be talked about over the sea. And there is just enough truth in what this French journal sarcastically says to make it cut. For, whatever other elements there may be in it, there is not the least doubt that race prejudice—a strong undercurrent of it long known to exist—was to a considerable degree at the bottom of the action of the San Francisco school board. So far as this was the case, the action was un-American and unworthy, and deserves all the reprobation that it has received, both in Japan and elsewhere. The Japanese indignation over the event arose from this consideration. They know perfectly well that the Californians, a large section of them, do not want the Japanese among them. They believe that this exclusion of four or five hundred of their youth—there are not more than that—from the San Francisco native schools is but the beginning of a movement that would ultimately, if it could, permit no more Japanese to land on our western shores. It is not the mere segregation of their boys that has aroused their disappointment and their anger; it is the imputation of inferiority, of unworthiness to live and associate with white Americans. And this, coming at a time when they have shown such extraordinary capacity of progress in nearly every modern line, has wounded them to the very heart.

It will take the most careful handling to prevent this occurrence from resulting in a misunderstanding between the two nations—that would be very unfortunate. The loss of trade resulting from a Japanese boycott of American goods, of which there has already been talk, would be the least of the evils growing from it. Japan has always considered us her best friend. She has learned many of her best lessons from us. Her young men have been sent to our schools, colleges and universities to receive the best that Western education can give them. To allow this high confidence to be broken would be a wound to civilization, to our own national honor and prestige also, that it would be difficult to heal. It must not be allowed to be made.

The course which the national government has taken in the matter is most praiseworthy. Secretary Root has hastened to assure the Japanese authorities that the California school board is not the whole